

Remarks

§ 103(a) Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1 to 3, 6, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,199,130 ("Berglund et al.") in view of U.S. No. 5,422,915 ("Byers et al."). Specifically, the Examiner stated:

But Berglund et al. do not disclose the plurality of elements powered by the first power domain and second power domain. However Byers et al. disclose the plurality of circuits powered by the first power domain and second power domain (see figure 5, col. 10, line 35 through col. 11, line 18). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Byers et al. within the system of Berglund et al. because it would allow concurrent maintenance of PCI based DASD.

October 19, 2004 Office Action, pp. 2 and 3 (emphasis added). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Berglund et al. discloses a system power control network (SPCN) processor connected to a multiplexer. Berglund et al., col. 5, lines 13 to 25. The multiplexer selectively connects the SPCN processor to one of multiple peripheral component interconnect (PCI) bridge circuits through I2C buses. Id. The PCI bridge circuits are connected to direct access storage devices (DASDs). Berglund et al., col. 5, lines 2 to 5. However, Berglund et al. does not recognize or suggest any reasons why it would be desirable to locate the PCI bridge circuits and the DASDs in multiple power domains.

Byers et al. recognizes that redundant circuit loads powered by separate power domains should be clocked by separate sources in each power domain. Byers et al., col. 1, lines 45 to 62. However, the clock sources need to be synchronized so that each circuit load is clocked at the same time. Byers et al., col. 1, line 62 to col. 2, line 5. Thus, Byers et al. solves this by providing a synchronizer and distribution circuitry for each power domain (e.g., circuit 64 in power domain A) that is coupled to a clock source in the same power domain (e.g., clock source A) and to clock sources in the other power domains (e.g., clock sources B to n in power domains B to n). See Fig. 1. However, Byers et al. does not recognize or suggest any reasons why it would be desirable to apply multiple power domains to slave devices on I2C buses.

Applicant finds no motivation to combine Berglund et al. and Byers et al. The Examiner stated that such a combination would allow concurrent maintenance of PCI based DASDs. However, Berglund et al. already allows concurrent maintenance of PCI based DASDs without the teachings of Byers et al. Furthermore, Applicant does not see if and how combining Berglund et al. and Byers et al. would further the current maintenance of PCI based DASDs. Thus, Applicant finds no motivation for one skilled in the art to further combine these two references.

Furthermore, even assuming there is motivation from Byers et al. and Berglund et al., it is only with hindsight in view of the present application did the Examiner know to group the PCI bridge circuits and the DASDs on each I2C bus into the same power domain. One could have easily have grouped the these devices on each I2C bus into different power domains without recognizing the benefits taught by the present application, which is that the failure of one power domain could bring down an entire I2C bus that runs across different power domains so that the remaining operational devices cannot communicate over the same bus. This benefit is not recognized or suggested by either Berglund et al. or Byers et al.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1 and are patentable over Berglund et al. in view of Byers et al. for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable.

In the Response filed on October 6, 2003, Applicant amended claim 6 to depend from claim 4. As the Examiner has indicated that claim 4 is allowable, the rejection of claim 6 is in error and claim 6 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 4.

Claim 12 is patentable over Berglund et al. in view of Byers et al. for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable.

Allowable Subject Matters

Applicant again thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 4, 7, 9 to 11, and 13 to 15 are allowable.

In summary, claims 1 to 4, 6, 7, and 9 to 15 were pending in the above-identified application when last examined. For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejections and objections and allow claims 1 to 4, 6, 7, and 9 to 15. Should the Examiner have any questions, please call the undersigned at (408) 382-0480x206.

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Respectfully submitted,


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